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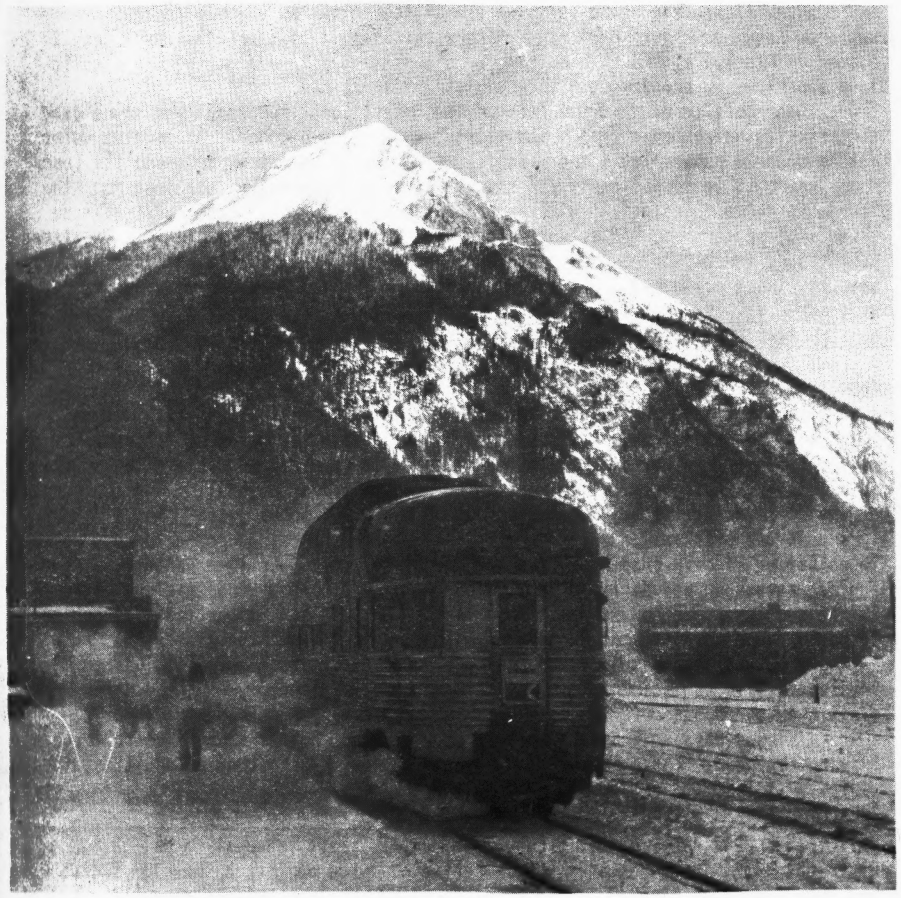

ON THE COVER:

(Front cover:) CP Rail's CANADIAN pauses eastbound at Field, B.C. on a cold and snowy winter day--Feb 12, 1976. Ahead are the spiral tunnels of Kicking Horse Pass. Photo by Glenn Lee. See Mr. Lee's article starting on page 5.

(Rear cover:) In this issue, starting on page 12, Peter Bretz reviews the Amtrak SOUTHWEST LIMITED operations just prior to their upgrading. In this photo, compressed by an 8X telephoto lens, the westbound SOUTHWEST LIMITED pulls into La Junta, Colorado on a Feb 1975 day, as a crewman waits to board. Photo: Message Media.

LETTERS

With all of the problems and priorities Amtrak faces (buying new equipment, keeping the old from falling apart, adding new routes, upgrading existing routes, better training and supervision of on-train personnel, etc., etc., etc.), the nit-picking comments of Christopher Anderson (1st Feb issue) seem rather ridiculous. From reading RTN for a couple of years now, it seems to me that most passengers rate Amtrak's total food service performance good and, in many cases, excellent. Very few complaints are seen regarding the actual preparation of the food. Is Mr. Anderson the only rail traveler who knows a "delightful" meal when he eats one? If a meal on today's BROADWAY wreaked havoc for over a week, certainly an extended convalescence would be required should he venture into a bus station cafeteria, allow a tray to be placed in his lap aboard an airplane, or steer his car toward one of the plastic food emporiums so handy to our interstates and turnpikes.

Mr. Anderson also bemoans the loss of the "amenities." Who really gives a damn if the drinking water comes from a plastic jug or a glass pitcher? As long as we're not reduced to paper plates and plasticware, let's allow Amtrak to spend its (our) money where it is needed most. If Amtrak is to be a success in the long run, the "seasoned ferroequinologist" will not be responsible for it. Rather, it will be those who, pre-Amtrak, had seldom if ever set foot on a train. They will be attracted by more and better routes, timekeeping, and equipment; moderate prices; efficient, courteous personnel. The day of the luxury limited is dead and gone--Amtrak must serve <u>all</u> the people with <u>all</u> its trains. And it deserves the support and <u>constructive</u> criticism of all travelers, railfan and non-railfan.

Jim Tatum
Pomona, California

Congratulations on another timely issue. Your cover description (last issue) refers to a simulated crew. I assume that the adjective is yours, not Amtrak's.

Television set advertising in the print media is required to contain the notation "simulated picture" because the real thing never attains the quality and sharpness of the slick ad presentation.

Perhaps one of these simulated crew members is the sleeping car porter who refused to assist an elderly passenger with luggage at Portland, and then verbally abused another passenger who declined to tip the porter after observing this quality of Amtrak service. Another may be the waiter on the MOUNTAINEER who last October refused to honor credit cards because he "didn't have the machine" to do so. A third may be the commissary manager who failed to adequately stock the STARLIGHT in Los Angeles despite advance knowledge of a sizeable tour movement, or the usually invisible on-board supervisor who was unable to arrange for re-stocking enroute.

One of these days someone will get it all together, but as many of us so frequently were reminded, "These things take time, you know." A hell of a long time, indeed.

Robert W. Glover
San Francisco, California

(cont'd on page 19)

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NOW THEY'VE DONE IT!

On Mar 15 we received Chicago Correspondent Jack Ferry's copy of the last issue of RTN, returned to us stamped "Return to writer. Not deliverable as addressed. No forwarding order on file." We knew he hadn't moved, because we'd just talked with him on the phone. If you don't receive your copy of RTN when it's expected, be sure to write us, indicating which issue is missing. The postal service is supposed to forward first class mail when you move, if you have filed your new address, but don't count on it. Give us your new address as soon as you know it--don't count on the postal service for prompt and reliable forwarding.

AND DON'T MISS our next issue of RTN (the 2nd March issue, out about April 6--we're still a week behind our normal schedule, and we elected not to catch up this month in order to bring you special coverage of April 1 East Coast events in the next issue). Our last issue was mailed Mar 8, not the Mar 5 we'd planned on.

mexico by

FIESTA TRAIN

4 Day TRAIN CRUISE to Guaymas and Mazatlan on May 28th. We use bus to and from Calexico and the private Pullman cars Red Cloud and the Harold F. Spence. Private dining room, lounge and shower on board. U. S. food and water is carried and most meals included. Per person rate is $219. double or $229. single. Only 28 are carried. Or-Organize your own tour group and we will set up a special departure for you.

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AMTRAK LOSES OUT ON CORRIDOR PURCHASE

In a major setback to Amtrak's Colonial Corridor plans, a joint House-Senate negotiating committee on Mar 18 disapproved the expenditure of $85 million for Amtrak's purchase of the Boston-Washington route. The rail corporation hoped to buy rather than lease the line, which will exchange ownership on April 1 with the ConRail takeover. The legislators concluded that Amtrak and Conrail should confer on some arrangement to lease the line or purchase it, or work out a lease-purchase arrangement. The negotiations, which concerned appropriations for the ConRail bill, resulted in the committee's approving $25 million for 1976 for improvements in the Corridor, another $25 million for the transitional July-Sept period (before the next fiscal year begins in October) for improvements, startup expenditures of $10 million, and $26.5 million for Corridor operations thru next Sept. The negotiators also deleted $650,000 that would have continued Metroliner telephone operation.

Amtrak's judgment is that leasing rather than buying the line is "fiscal irresponsibility," making Amtrak a back-door conduit for subsidies to ConRail. Amtrak is apparently fearful that ConRail may turn out to be another Penn Central, giving poor service and demanding steadily higher leasing costs. Amtrak said that a 10-year lease of the Corridor would cost 2-3 times the amount that outright purchase would. The full Congress has yet to okay the negotiators' pact. The deleted funds were included in the original Senate bill but not the House bill.

AUTO-TRAIN SUFFERS A DERAILMENT

Nobody was injured, but 14 auto-carrying cars of the southbound AUTO-TRAIN derailed on a trestle over Quantico Creek near Possum Point, VA at 6:50pm on Mar 7, at a point 200 feet from an RF&P freight derailment the previous Wednesday. There were 346 passengers on the 53-car train. Six of the derailed cars fell into Quantico Creek, and there was damage to a number of automobiles carried in the cars. Gasoline from the autos' tanks and fuel oil from one of the cars, which was a steam generator, seeped into the creek. The train was delayed 2 hours, but proceeded to Florida minus the affected cars. Auto-Train Corporation said it would provide Florida transportation for passengers whose automobiles had been damaged. The train broke apart at the point of connection between the auto carriers and the passenger cars. Auto-Train recently changed its operations to carry the auto carriers at the rear, rather than the front of the train. A corporation spokesman said this results in a much better ride for passengers. Presumably it also averted a larger disaster on Mar 7.

NORTHWEST SENATORS OPEN FIGHT FOR NEW RAIL ROUTE

Senator Frank Church of Idaho, who announced his candidacy for President this week, said in a Senate subcommittee meeting on Mar 3 that Amtrak is breaking the law by failing to establish the Portland-Boise-Ogden route that he said Congress ordered earlier to be given top priority among experimental routes. Church and an aide criticized Amtrak's deficit figures the corporation recently revised upward (see last issue, p. 16), calling them absurd. Along with Senators Mark Hatfield of Oregon and Warren Magnuson of Washington, Church also called for the maintenance and expansion of Northwest Amtrak services (Amtrak has listed the Portland-Seattle run as one of the routes it would drop if the White House's proposed budget cuts are carried out). Hatfield criticized Amtrak for concentrating only on the Northeast in its efforts at modernization of service, advertising, and increased efficiency. Instead of discontinuing the Portland-Seattle trains, Hatfield indicated, Amtrak should work on these areas of improvement to increase ridership and trim costs. Oregon newspapers this month reported that Oregon DOT planner Robert Rynerson criticized Amtrak's reluctance to start up the Boise train, saying it has underestimated the patronage (UP had 69 passengers daily in 69, against Amtrak's latest estimate of 30-40) and overestimated the costs. Meanwhile, stories persist that Amtrak plans in the near future to place Amfleet equipment on several Western corridor runs, including Portland-Seattle, where

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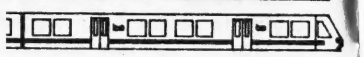
12 Amfleet cars reportedly will be assigned, for 3 sets of equipment including three coaches and a snack-lounge car for each. Amfleet cars are expected to go on the SAN JOAQUIN also, and there is talk of them on the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL. However it now appears likely that the SAN DIEGANS will be the first to see the new equipment.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"You get these damn railroad buffs who want passenger trains to go all the way across the country. We've got a better way to go. You get on an airplane."

--Chief Executive Ian Sinclair of CP Rail, quoted in Business Week, Feb 23.

Urban-Suburban Transit



THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE of Architects has proposed an alternative plan to Chicago's downtown subway--less costly because of belief that UMTA will not fund the present plan. The AIA plan retains the elevated, making it quieter and more esthetic, and substituting ground-level transit on existing railroad rights of way for some subway lines.

ILLINOIS CENTRAL GULF Railroad has received ICC approval to raise commuter fares in the Chicago area an average of 37%, reports the Wall Street Journal (Mar 16). The railroad, which must give 30 days advance notice, has not decided on a date.

THE DADE COUNTY rapid transit system (Miami) is off to a good start with federal approval Mar 4 of $15.2 million in DOT starter money, and a promise that the agency will assist with the first half of the system's construction, at least. The over-$2 billion system is to be 48 miles long, with the first line opened by 1982.

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION Administration announced Mar 12 four grants totaling $160 million for transit improvements to the NYC Transit Authority. Half of this amount will cover current operating expenses. The remainder is for new subway construction and upgrading of present subway and bus systems.

BOTTLED GAS TANK exploded in a subway tunnel construction area in southwest Washington DC at 7:30pm on Mar 17, injuring about 20 workers, some seriously.

A NEW FERRY, the "San Francisco," being built by Campbell Industries Shipyards in San Diego for use on Golden Gate Transit's San Francisco-Marin County commuter runs, was damaged in an engine room fire during tests the night of Mar 15, setting back delivery date of the vessel, already 13 months behind, by several months.

TRANSIT BRIEFS: One lane of the Santa Monica Freeway in L.A. was set aside for buses and cars of 3 or more occupants starting Mar 15, and the first morning saw mammoth traffic jams and confusion that "miraculously" disappeared the second morning... A bill making the BART sales tax permanent, and distributing it also to AC Transit and the San Francisco Muni Railway, was introduced into the Calif. Assembly Mar 15.. March 15 saw the Paris subway shut down by a 24-hour strike of workers..... Transit Authority of Louisville and Jefferson Co., KY, received a $3.2 million UMTA grant in early March to help buy Prospect Bus lines Co. and pay for new buses. A very similar grant went to the Dallas Transit System for purchase of 50 new buses..... The City of Fresno, CA has found the Rohr Industries' Flxible division the low bidder ($3.4 million) on an order of 50 transit buses for the San Joaquin Valley city..... Harold H. Geissenheimer, a Pittsburgh transit executive with over 25 years experience, was appointed on Feb 23 Manager of the General Operations Division of the Chicago Transit Authority..... Port Authority Transit in Pittsburgh set a new ridership record of over 109.6 million souls in 1975, up 6 million from 1974..... Pittsburgh officials are worried about the loss of key personnel from PAT to other transit systems. Mr. Geissenheimer (see above) was the third top executive to leave in recent months..... Golden Gate Transit in the San Francisco-Marin area is considering a bus, ferry, and bridge toll increase, to be effective July 1 if approved by the Board on Apr 23.....

Rail Canada

The federal government's passenger train cutback plans will leave Canadian rail travel quite different from what we've known. Here's another look at present-day Canadian trains, this time in Western Canada--and more reasons why the core of an efficient transportation system must be the rails

DESTINATION BANFF

by Glenn Lee

Those of us in the Great Northwest who are confirmed mountain gazers occasionally take some good-natured ribbing about it. This has included the Sid Barron cartoons from the Calgary Albertan, wherein notices are often posted at the windows in the offices, which read: "Employees must not gaze at the mountains during working hours." In The Vancouver Sun, one famous Len Norris cartoon showed a retired couple in their North Vancouver home. The husband, at the view window, was counting with his fingers while the wife was on the phone with a worried look. The caption read: "While we do not wish to unduly alarm municipal hall, Reggie seems to be a mountain short in his count this morning."

When I get to feeling about like that, it's time to look at the mountains somewhere else, and from a dome car, if possible. And so it was time to go to Banff on the CANADIAN. A mid-February trek to the Alberta resort community began at noon in the Greyhound depot in downtown Seattle. Shivering lines of passengers stood outside as rain swirled thru the city streets. Arrival in downtown Vancouver was over 30 minutes late due to slow passage thru Canadian customs as Blaine, Wash.,-Douglas, B.C., surely one of the worst places anywhere for public transport patrons to cross between the two nations.

The rain was worse in downtown Vancouver, and I elected to wait in the large, but very faded CP waiting room. Altho most of the benches have been removed, the large hall remains a sitting room for the old men of the downtown area; some very well kept, others not so well kept. A friend from a nearby office joined me and explained great plans: CP was soon to spend $1 million to improve the depot. The large waiting room was slated to become the concourse and ticket office not only for two planned weekday commuter trains to Coquitlam, but also for the new North Vancouver ferries, which would dock immediately to the north. The raked masts and stacks of "Princess Patricia" were visible in the fading light as we took the escalator down to trackside. Inspecting the train was a lonely experience, as the passenger count would be about 30. The consist was: locomotives 8513 and 8508; baggage-dorm 607, coach 126, Skyline dome 506, diner "Annapolis," sleepers "Chateau Latour" and "Wolfe Manor," and sleeper-dome-observation "Strathcona Park."

My friend elected to travel to Coquitlam with me, and we reviewed additional bits of information for the proposed commuter service: two trains daily inbound in the morning, returning in the afternoon; 1000 (or so) passengers per train, with the ex-CNW bi-level cars the most likely rolling stock. These trains were to be "fleeted" with the CANADIAN in both directions, as CP did not wish to open up the second mainline track, now often used for car storage.

Leaving Coquitlam, I went to the observation dome car to read the newspapers. The evening Vancouver Sun carried a major editorial entitled "The Amtrak Option," and there was other discussion about the proposed cutbacks in Canadian passenger train service. Posted in each car was an SP-like "abandonment" notice from the Canadian Transport Commission announcing the CANADIAN had been ordered continued, despite the losses, pegged at $18 million for 1972; $21 million for 1973; and $24 million for 1974.

A steak for dinner in the dining car was a multi-faceted experience. The food service has diminished somewhat, but there are still enough evidences of "grand hotel" to make the experience worthwhile. Dining car "Annapolis" was still in very good mechan-

ical and decorative shape--not always true of other cars in the consist. The tables had been removed from the "banquette" sections at each end of the car. With less than 20 passengers in the sleepers, there was no great demand for seats.

Returning to the dome-observation near Mission, I noted that it had started snowing, and the intensity increased as we approached Agassiz. Others in the dome wondered what this might mean for our passage up the Fraser River canyon during the night. As we left Agassiz, the dome filled with a number of middle-age patrons en route to a curling competition in Lethbridge, Alta. Soon their conversation revealed them to be CP employees, and the subject turned to that No. 1 topic--"What CP Was Up To Next." The group was from Vancouver Island, and reviewed the evil lurking in CP's heart for the E&N RDC run; the problems with Port Alberni switcher crews; and much, much more.

"So Much" CP talk was quite enough, and with sufficient muck for one evening, I returned to my roomette. The snowfall diminished, and I was able to look across the Fraser Canyon to see a long CN freight working eastbound, the "ditch lights" of the caboose illuminating the CN right-of-way as the freight paced the CANADIAN. And so to bed.

Dawn came early on the long uphill grade east from Revelstoke to Glacier on the west side of Rogers Pass. Altho there has been a deficiency in snowfall in many areas this winter, the Rogers Pass zone did not seem to be suffering. The CANADIAN had lost some time during the night, and the two units were not straining much moving the 7-car consist under the towering peaks. A section of CP's test catenary overhead slipped by, and by the time we entered the 5-mile Connaught Tunnel, I was dressing. The Stoney Creek Trestle slipped by, seeming somewhat less impressive than in the CP publicity photos, perhaps because the CANADIAN seemed so very short today.

Breakfast was delayed until the foot of the pass was reached at Beavermouth, on the banks of the Columbia River. A new grade has been prepared here, and the track seemed very smooth, in comparison with stretches of track elsewhere that seemed much bumpier than on a similar trip in 1972. Breakfast was adequate, and was made pleasant by the bright decor of the diner. However, there were only a few others in the car, and the feeling of lonesomeness grew. I wondered if CP might be planning a "Vanishing Canadian" ad along the lines of SP's infamous old "Vanishing American" ad of 1965. If so, their agency would have lots of material on today's consist, I thought.

After breakfast, I had time to check the consist. The major problem is the fading decor. In the coaches, the plush-covered seats are worn, and seemingly replaced occasionally only seat by seat. This is also true for dome seating. Some cars seem fairly new due to this slow process, other cars seem quite faded. The rugs in the sleepers are worn, and much of the passenger decor cries for a good "spring housecleaning."

The dome forward windows were clouded, and viewing was not good. As the train passed eastward thru the canyon between Golden and Field, I left the rear dome to go forward to the Skyline dome, hoping to get some photos rear toward the observation--a bad mistake. As I passed thru "Chateau Latour," the sleeper lurched viciously to the left, knocking my head instantly into a safety grabiron adjacent to an upper duplex roomette. The solid blow broke my glasses at the right temple. The lenses crashed to the floor, and the temple frame flew to the right, landing under the radiator of the duplex roomette, which was unoccupied. The glancing blow had resulted in a cut just to the right of my right eye.

The dining car steward said he was unable to help, and suggested I go to the Skyline car. At least he knew the train; for the attendant in the Skyline car was quickly able to tape the glasses together; and also provided some napkins to remove a slight stream of blood. About 10 minutes of sitting, and I seemed recovered, altho bathed in sweat from the event.

Despite the light load, the rear dome was well filled as the CANADIAN began the ascent from Field thru the Spiral Tunnels to Lake Louise. A thick cloud cover helped with viewing, by preventing the dazzling sunlight that gives eyestrain. In either direction, the phrase to remember is: left-right. The turn inside the first spiral is to the left, followed by a trip thru the second spiral, in which the train turns right.

The ascent is long and slow, but it seemed only a matter of minutes before we were crossing the continental divide west of Lake Louise. "You see, it is 'Sunny Alberta'," said a woman as we left the clouds behind, revealing the splendor of the Canadian Rockies at their brilliant best--and well worth the now "high" fares being charged, both coach and sleeper.

A trainman in the dome as we left Lake Louise had some thoughts on the situation of the CANADIAN, altho he admitted, like others, that no one had any good idea what the Liberal Party's proposed train cutbacks would do. The trainman said that the worst facet of the situation at present seemed to be the very light loadings which developed following the Christmas rush. There were today about 16 in the sleepers, and 18 in coach. In addition, he said, the quality of train-service help had deteriorated, as employee morale and supervision were being eroded by events. He said that he himself would not travel on the CANADIAN as a passenger and expose himself and his family to the poor quality service that he had observed on recent trips. Yet he said the train had carried up to 400 passengers the previous holiday season, with 5 coaches and 4 sleepers a normal consist.

On the high-speed track between Lake Louise and Banff, I had an opportunity to check the cars once again--and mechanically they seem in very good shape. I thought that perhaps too much evaluation of passenger train equipment is made today thru eyes that check aircraft and autos with their naturally short lifespans. With only modest overhaul and regular upkeep, it seems that the CANADIAN stainless steel equipment has many years of life ahead.

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As I was traveling coach, I had an opportunity to review the operation from another viewpoint en route to Calgary, some two hours away. Again, the train was only lightly patronized. This is perhaps the reason ill-behaved children seemed so conspicuous, and made such a nuisance of themselves in the Skyline car as we glided past the enormous peaks between Banff and Canmore. We had departed Banff at 1:27pm, and were out of the snowfall about 15 to 20 minutes later. At 2:37pm we met the westbound CANADIAN near Cochrane under a light overcast. To the west, the mountains were visible, capped by thick clouds.

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ical and decorative shape--not always true of other cars in the consist. The tables had been removed from the "banquette" sections at each end of the car. With less than 20 passengers in the sleepers, there was no great demand for seats.

Returning to the dome-observation near Mission, I noted that it had started snowing, and the intensity increased as we approached Agassiz. Others in the dome wondered what this might mean for our passage up the Fraser River canyon during the night. As we left Agassiz, the dome filled with a number of middle-age patrons en route to a curling competition in Lethbridge, Alta. Soon their conversation revealed them to be CP employees, and the subject turned to that No. 1 topic--"What CP Was Up To Next." The group was from Vancouver Island, and reviewed the evil lurking in CP's heart for the E&N RDC run; the problems with Port Alberni switcher crews; and much, much more.

"So Much" CP talk was quite enough, and with sufficient muck for one evening, I returned to my roomette. The snowfall diminished, and I was able to look across the Fraser Canyon to see a long CN freight working eastbound, the "ditch lights" of the caboose illuminating the CN right-of-way as the freight paced the CANADIAN. And so to bed.

Dawn came early on the long uphill grade east from Revelstoke to Glacier on the west side of Rogers Pass. Altho there has been a deficiency in snowfall in many areas this winter, the Rogers Pass zone did not seem to be suffering. The CANADIAN had lost some time during the night, and the two units were not straining much moving the 7-car consist under the towering peaks. A section of CP's test catenary overhead slipped by, and by the time we entered the 5-mile Connaught Tunnel, I was dressing. The Stoney Creek Trestle slipped by, seeming somewhat less impressive than in the CP publicity photos, perhaps because the CANADIAN seemed so very short today.

Breakfast was delayed until the foot of the pass was reached at Beavermouth, on the banks of the Columbia River. A new grade has been prepared here, and the track seemed very smooth, in comparison with stretches of track elsewhere that seemed much bumpier than on a similar trip in 1972. Breakfast was adequate, and was made pleasant by the bright decor of the diner. However, there were only a few others in the car, and the feeling of lonesomeness grew. I wondered if CP might be planning a "Vanishing Canadian" ad along the lines of SP's infamous old "Vanishing American" ad of 1965. If so, their agency would have lots of material on today's consist, I thought.

After breakfast, I had time to check the consist. The major problem is the fading decor. In the coaches, the plush-covered seats are worn, and seemingly replaced occasionally only seat by seat. This is also true for dome seating. Some cars seem fairly new due to this slow process, other cars seem quite faded. The rugs in the sleepers are worn, and much of the passenger decor cries for a good "spring housecleaning."

The dome forward windows were clouded, and viewing was not good. As the train passed eastward thru the canyon between Golden and Field, I left the rear dome to go forward to the Skyline dome, hoping to get some photos rear toward the observation--a bad mistake. As I passed thru "Chateau Latour," the sleeper lurched viciously to the left, knocking my head instantly into a safety grabiron adjacent to an upper duplex roomette. The solid blow broke my glasses at the right temple. The lenses crashed to the floor, and the temple frame flew to the right, landing under the radiator of the duplex roomette, which was unoccupied. The glancing blow had resulted in a cut just to the right of my right eye.

The dining car steward said he was unable to help, and suggested I go to the Skyline car. At least he knew the train; for the attendant in the Skyline car was quickly able to tape the glasses together; and also provided some napkins to remove a slight stream of blood. About 10 minutes of sitting, and I seemed recovered, altho bathed in sweat from the event.

Despite the light load, the rear dome was well filled as the CANADIAN began the ascent from Field thru the Spiral Tunnels to Lake Louise. A thick cloud cover helped with viewing, by preventing the dazzling sunlight that gives eyestrain. In either direction, the phrase to remember is: left-right. The turn inside the first spiral is to the left, followed by a trip thru the second spiral, in which the train turns r.ght.

The ascent is long and slow, but it seemed only a matter of minutes before we were crossing the continental divide west of Lake Louise. "You see, it is 'Sunny Alberta'," said a woman as we left the clouds behind, revealing the splendor of the Canadian Rockies at their brilliant best--and well worth the now "high" fares being charged, both coach and sleeper.

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Breakfast my last morning in Calgary was in the Calgary Tower, some 600 feet above the street, and one of the most spectacular sites imaginable for fine views of the mountains. The air was clear, and the Rockies seemed to stretch from horizon to horizon; from west of Lethbridge to the south; to far northwest of Banff. A Chinook Arch was evident to the west, an indication that the famous warming wind might arrive in Calgary by late afternoon.

My stay at the Palliser Hotel (often called the "Paralyzer" by veteran travelers, and some not-so-veteran now that the term occasionally appears in the hotel's advertising) had been pleasant. About the only off-beat incident was the desk clerk's marking my arrival by "plane" rather than train.

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After negotiating the upper spiral tunnel, the CANADIAN came to a halt, at 4:38pm, just north of the Trans-Canada highway overcrossing. Here we were to sit for exactly one hour. I left my seat in the observation and walked thru the train. Crewmen in the coach had obtained the story on the radio: the freight, proceeding downhill, had broken in two in the lower spiral tunnel. There would be a considerable delay while an attempt was made to reconnect the two sections.

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long day for me, and I decided to retire. Before reaching my roomette in "Abbott Manor" I read the small metal tablet posted in the aisle, announcing that the car honored Sir John J. C. Abbott, fourth Prime Minister of Canada, who in the seven years prior to being named Prime Minister had been CP's legal counsel. Falling asleep, I could only assume CP's interests in Ottawa had been carefully nurtured while Sir John sat as Prime Minister. Outside, I heard a freight rush by after we had stopped in a siding, and recall perhaps ten cars pass....

....and then it was morning east of Vancouver. I had slept soundly, and was in the very best of spirits. The trip was ending on an upbeat note, despite the occasional rain outside. A number of happy melodies flowed thru my head as I prepared to leave the train, including one which includes the lines, "the joys of summer." And this in mid-February!

How would I sum up the ride? A most complex question! In some cases, the CANADIAN is painful, like a friend dying of cancer. Especially if one has been familiar with the train for a while. I have been watching since 1966, and thus it hurts.

Otherwise, still a magnificent experience. Baroque music lover and radio personality DeKoven, were he a train buff, might rate the CANADIAN today somewhere between OTU (Out of this Universe) to OTG (Out of this Galaxy), depending on the set of equipment he drew to ride. For as with other trains these days, the trip can range from so-so to very good, depending on the circumstances of crew, weather, dispatching, and luck.

It seems certain that the CANADIAN situation will be subject to change soon. Anyone who can do so is encouraged to make his reservations soon.

AT HEARINGS HELD on Vancouver Island early in March, CP Rail claimed, to the hoots and jeers of an audience of 150 gathered to discuss the proposed abandonment of the E&N Railway, that it had spent over $7000 advertising its Dayliner service between 1971 and 1975, and that the passenger run was losing about $100,000 per year. The CTC hearings included suggestions from labor representatives that the railway be taken over by the government without reimbursement to CP. Two citizens presented a 30-page resume of CP's "moral, statutory and contractual obligations" to provide service it promised in return to timber rights given the railway and receipts from land sales. The road's experiment with reversal of its traditional travel direction was termed a disaster, reducing patronage which has never returned.

UNITED AIRCRAFT TURBOTRAINS belonging to Amtrak may be sold to Canada, according to reliable reports from Washington DC.

FORMER CANADIAN NATIONAL cruise ship "Prince George" has been sold to a Nanaimo, B.C. firm for use as a convention center and seafood restaurant; cost $325,000.

RECENT FARE INCREASES to 50¢ per ride on the Toronto transit system caused massive civic protests; but the Metro Council by a 22-10 vote refused to overrule the decision. On Feb 23 some 10,000 calls were placed to the TTC public relations dept., but only 5,479 got thru. Meanwhile, the Toronto Area Transit Operating Authority was stressing the need for increased rates on the GO Transit commuter system.

PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE FROM CLEVELAND UNION TERMINAL

by Peter Roehm

Friday the thirteenth! Nonetheless a good day to see what remains in the way of passenger rail service to and from the Cleveland Union Terminal. Having flown in from Philadelphia, we deplaned and walked to the adjacent terminal of the Regional Transportation Authority's transit system and boarded one of the streamlined "Airport" cars for downtown. Twenty minutes and 35¢ later we were in the dark underground of C.U.T. We went topside and found the main floor area somewhat active. Over toward Track 13 we saw the train board announcing the presence of the Erie's train to Youngstown and back behind the tennis courts one could see the old master board with most of the old railroads painted out.

The former Cleveland Transit System rapid trnsit lines provide east-west service between the Airport and Windermere generally paralleling the old NYC main as well as the NKP. The other occupant of the terminal, other than the Erie, is the former Shaker Heights Rapid Transit system, which runs two lines from CUT to Van Aiken and Shaker Boulevards with a junction at Shaker Square. The once-planned extension beyond Green at the end of the Shaker Blvd. line is still intact.

Used on the Shaker Heights lines are PCC cars some of which bear an ancestry of the Twin Cities Rapid Transit system in Minnesota. These cars are now being repainted from the old SHRT canary yellow into a bright RTA salmon orange or thereabouts. Fortunately, our conductor/motorman on the outbound to Green was a lifelong traction historian, whose photography has appeared in many publications. Motorman Anthony Krisak spotted his RTA-painted PCC for us at the Green loop and mentioned that the SHRT lines would be getting new cars if any could be found. The Boeing LRV's were ruled out, as RTA people didn't want to face the headaches Boston is. He did mention that a Belgium firm said they could have a LRV-type vehicle ready with 2 years, but no decision has been made.

The CTS and SHRT lines of the RTA are each different but not that much from other lines around the country. There appears to be no danger of their withdrawal from service, but a serious rail passenger advocate would do well to enjoy their presence if he is in the area. But there is one other service to and from CUT that may yet find itself out of the running, and that is the weekday-only roundtrip on the Erie Lackawanna between Youngstown and Cleveland. This sole remaining exclusive E-L passenger service is almost as unusual as the GM&O train from Chicago to Joliet. The E-L operates their train with 3 ex-main line coaches (like those the D&H bought from them for their passenger service), and usually an E-8 engine. However, for those who doubted my recent mention on this, the E-L train has indeed used other power, as documented by the journal Extra 2200 South.

We set out for the second stop out of CUT--East 55th St. & McBride Ave., the E-L yard. To get there, we took to CTS rapid to East 55th and walked a few blocks south. What we found in the yard was E-8 #833 and 3 coaches--1306-1304-1305, delayed by a switching move from backing into CUT. Absolute luck: not only would we get daylight rather than dusk shots, but maybe we could deadhead into CUT. We could, thru the courtesy of the conductor, and we did. The E-8 was freshly cleaned, and altho the coaches showed the grime of winter on the exterior, they were spotless on the interior, with headrest (just like those on the BROADWAY coaches) covers and the restroom was clean, with fresh soap, towels, and looking as tho this was a train wanted by the E-L, which in fact it is not.

The E-L claims it loses around $155,000 annually on this run and has tried umpteen times to drop it. So far the Ohio PUC has said no, and the OARP is working diligently with this agency as well as the Ohio DOT to convince those with decision-making powers that this train should remain in operation, whether it is by E-L, Chessie, ConRail, or RTA. During our trip we counted 150 patrons in the 3 coaches (each seats 60), and it was a very congenial group. The train has a potential for development, but hardly a soul knows it even exists.

Erie 28 and 29 offer a rare ride thru typical Midwestern countryside with standard non-Amtrak equipment, and we would urge that the various protective devices of the ConRail/USRA commuter subsidy programs notwithstanding, one hurry to Cleveland (CUT) or Youngstown (Commerce & Phelps Sts.) and take a ride on the Erie.

So--Cleveland Union Terminal is still very much a rail passenger terminal, altho not quite of the tradition that many of us would recall. And, it even yields a surprise now and then: we found Illinois Terminal PCC #450 in fresh ITC green and white, being readied for service, as we boarded our SHRT car outbound. You never know what you might find in the dark underground of a once-proud bastion of travel.

IS THERE A SUPER IN THE SOUTHWEST?

BY PETER PUTNAM BRETZ

February 16, 1976: We stood on the platform at Oxnard, watching the 40-minute late COAST STARLIGHT approach. A typical consist of 8 coaches with a lunch counter car, then diner and lounge and 2 sleepers slid to a stop. As a bonus, private car "Hulham" was on the rear, sporting its usual NORTH COAST LIMITED drumhead sign. We jumped aboard and rode the 66 miles to Los Angeles, whetting our appetite for another sumptuous meal of sampling trains.

Tonight our plans and tickets read Lamy, New Mexico, and we were looking forward to a couple of days of old-fashioned fun. In other words, a sleeper on the SUPER CHIEF. But wait a minute--according to Santa Fe President John Reed, there is no such train; that's all in the past. Amtrak's premier train to Chicago is now something called the SOUTHWEST LIMITED. Let's see, where has that name come up before? Well the Rock Island used to run a SOUTHWEST EXPRESS from Kansas City to Los Angeles over the IMPERIAL route... and the NYC and IC both ran SOUTHWESTERN LIMITEDs (to St. Louis and Shreveport, respectively). The only SOUTHWEST LIMITED that comes fully to mind was the Milwaukee's effort from Chicago to Kansas City via Savannah. Amtrak originally wanted to name this train the WEST WIND, but learned that it meant "zephyr," so decided against it.

So here we are, breathlessly standing next to No. 4 at Los Angeles after a late arrival off No. 11 at 7:45pm. We'd just raced up to the head end to note what engines are pulling our train this night. Still puffing, we hurry back to car 0431 with only a couple of minutes to spare. Stowing our gear, we walk to a vestibule only to discover we're already underway. A glance at the watch confirms it to be exactly 8pm--a very smooth beginning.

We slowly twist by Mission Tower and the Los Angeles River. Hey! Here's that concrete abutment with the painted sign advertising "Eight trains daily to San Francisco/Oakland." The faint white paint is barely visible now as that kind of service was so very long ago. What were those eight trains? The COAST DAYLIGHT, of course; the SAN JOAQUIN DAYLIGHT, the LARK, the OWL... uhh, NOON DAYLIGHT, the WEST COAST, and the COASTER. Seven What was that other one? Ahh! The SUNSET LIMITED. It used to go all the way up to The City. So, eight trains--dating back to the early fifties. Just about the time Santa Fe was re-equipping the SUPER CHIEF with its second set of lightweight cars.

But let's return to reality. This is 1976, there is only the SOUTHWEST LIMITED going this way (over the Santa Fe) today. The SUPER CHIEF has gone to the Happy Hunting Grounds. Or has it? We return to the roomette and study it. The car is "Palm Tower," built in 1951 by ACF for the SUPER CHIEF. The interior is pink and rouge. It has its Farnsworth music system intact--that is, the buttons are there that read "classical music, popular, etc., and Train Announcements." Of course, it doesn't work. In spite of such foreknowledge, we're still a little disappointed not to hear soft background music as we are now effortlessly moving thru backyards and woods on our way to Pasadena. It's not fair to compare our past memories to Amtrak's current effort. We shall consider the SOUTHWEST LIMITED a separate entity--this SUPER never existed.

Checking the train's consist gives us SDP40F's 516 and 524 marching along first, followed by E9A 417; baggage car 1160; dorm with high-level adapter 9990; hi-level coach 9909; high-level diner 9983; high-level coach 9922; sleeper "Indian Flute"; Pleasure Dome lounge with Turquoise Room 9351; diner 8037; sleepers "Palm Tower" and "Pacific Beauty." And ...that's it! No more. Only six revenue cars. The E unit and the last sleeper are ex-UP; all the rest of the train is ex-Santa Fe. It's a vivid reminder of the SUPER CHIEF in spite of our resolve.

Leaving Pasadena (on time), we browse our way to the diner. Humph! No stationery nor magazines in the lounge car. Not like the old days. No, no... don't think that way! This is just another Amtrak train--nothing very special. We are seated in the diner at last, and smell the pink and white carnations. Yes, this is more like Amtrak. The table settings are all Amtrak, too, with not a spoon or pitcher or menu holder from the Santa Fe. Even the pencil reads NRPC.

Hello, here's the new standard dinner menu. It's red, like the other trains', but it reads "SOUTHWEST LIMITED", and that's the only difference. We like these menus, especially the John Gay quotation: "From wine what sudden friendship springs." And "Good evening... in the railroad tradition, please write your dinner order on the meal check." Four entrees are listed, including a 10-ounce New York steak at $6.95. Our choice is the Fluffy three-egg omelette, "filled with cheese or jelly." It arrives cooked well, but cheese only on the top in little strips; we would have preferred it thru and thru. Now in the old days... We ask "May we have a baked potato instead of the whipped?" "Yessuh," the waiter says, "right away, suh." It comes piled high with sour cream and bacon bits. Ahh, bless me this is pleasant, dining on the rail. But no finger bowls.

Standing on the platform at San Bernardino, we're enveloped with leaking steam from between the last two cars. "Looks like a gasket missing," says a trainman. "They'll fix it at Barstow." A moonlight ride over Cajon (about half the dome car windows are fogged), fast running down the other side, and we're at the division point. Workmen bang around on the air hoses, but don't fix the leak. Here at Barstow, we change engines, with 511, 520 and 502 being put on the point. We sneak out into the night, 17 minutes late. Turning into Roomette 5, we pull down the bed (the wide kind where one steps into the aisle behind zipped curtains) and settle in under beige Pullman Company blankets.

Morning dawns crisp and clear, with patches of snow on the ground, as we double-stop at Flagstaff. Really, this is unnecessary on so short a train. Still on time, and we keep it up the rest of the day. The snow-capped San Francisco Mountains show out the rear vestibule as we speed east. We resolve to take breakfast before Winslow. The menu this morning is yellow, and half the size of last night's. Amtrak suggests a zesty alcoholic eye-opener. We decline. French Toast is the selection, and true to the Santa Fe tradition, is prepared fluffy and light, topped with confectioner's sugar. A plate of link sausages and juice completes a fine meal. Service is top notch, and this was a good reminder of the SUPER CHIEF. Yes, all is not lost ...uh, oh! Maybe it is. We notice the orange juice glass of the man across from us. Unwashed lipstick is clearly visible on the rim. That would never pass the old Santa Fe kitchens. We don't mention this and the man drinking doesn't notice. But really!

Out on the station platform at Winslow now, checking the engine numbers and taking pictures, we notice an unusual passenger boarding. A blind man with his seeing-eye dog, accompanied by two burly-looking men. Time passes and out they come again from a sleeping car with two people in tow. Turns out the blind man wasn't blind at all, but an undercover agent with his marijuana-sniffing dog. On a tip, they collected two large suitcases from a roomette. One guy got on at Flagstaff, and another tried to get on at Winslow. Opening the luggage, they find it packed full with "grass", plus some harder drugs. We take movies as the handcuffed men were taken away. An hour later, as the train is clicking along, the conductor stops by our room and asks if we're the one with the camera. He then proceeds to take our name and address on the request of the police at Winslow--just in case. Ah yes, there always seems to be some kind of thrill or adventure when one travels these days. But nothing yet like this "great marijuana heist." The rest of the trip seemed uneventful by comparison.

Out of Gallup we encountered snow flurries, which soon dissipated. At Albuquerque, vestiges of the old Santa Fe service were still in evidence as the train windows are washed by the little fork-lift machine with that great big brush. After leaving here, we decided to try lunch at the high-level diner-lounge. The same menu is in effect in

both diners, altho our ham sandwich was watery and below par indeed. The lounge section consists of four tables set aside for this purpose, as well as four lounge-type chairs--all stuffed into a corner of the high-level diner. Very inadequate, in our opinion. Due to the lack of a full-length lounge, no Kachina Coffee Shop was on the train. However, a "snack bar" facility in the lounge section was available, but this was no more than piles of sandwiches, Twinkies, etc., sitting on one of the tables. There was all-night service, however.

Lamy, N.M., at last, where we detrain and wave goodbye to the SUPER CHIEF--oops! the SOUTHWEST LIMITED. During the 45 minutes between trains, there is time to note the blue tile in the washroom, the turquoise-colored wooden benches with dark, carved backs, in the waiting area. We reflect that the last time we got a train here at Lamy (the station for Santa Fe, N.M.) was back in 1952 when the low-level EL CAPITAN came rolling in (with its swallow-tail coach observation car) for Chicago. Now, however, it was back to Los Angeles. Soon, here comes No. 3, looking virtually identical to the previous train--having passed each other up the line at Glorietta. As the train glides to a stop, we note the consist: engines 528, 507, & 522; baggage 1152; dorm/adapter 9995; hi-level coach 9906; hi-level diner-lounge 9980; hi-level coach 9920 (all these hi-level cars have the red-white-&-blue horizontal stripes below the window level, a great esthetic improvement); 4-4-2 sleeper "Regal Stream"; dome lounge (with Turquoise Room) 9350; diner 8042. The train stops here and we clamber aboard. We go thru the train to take down the names of the three rear sleepers and discover they are: 10-6 "Palm Loch" 2754; 10-6 "Pacific Falls" 2610; and ... then we walk into the rear car. Immediately we realize our blunder--we're in a private business car.

A gentleman on the telephone asks us to have a seat, and presently: "What can I do for you?" We explain that we're writing an article on train travel and came in here by accident. "Oh, that's perfectly alright," says Mr. Ted Mason, Assistant Superintendant of Operations for the entire Santa Fe system. He graciously offers a cup of coffee, and we enjoy it in the solarium lounge. The car is named "Mountainair," originally built in 1949 by Pullman Standard for the U.S. Steel Corporation, and named "Laurel Ridge." Conversation centers around Amtrak's passenger policies and Santa Fe's welded rail program. Mr. Mason agrees that a re-birth of the SUPER is unlikely. We stay only until coffee is finished so as not to wear out our welcome. The car gets switched out at Albuquerque. Again the train gets washed, and then we're off to the setting sun.

Supper this evening is a delight. The special on the menu is Top Sirloin of Beef, and it comes filling the plate, tasting delicious. This dining car (8042) was refurbished in a more pleasing manner than the other diner. The ceiling was done in brown with indirect lighting--overall, very conducive to quiet relaxation. Service was outstanding for supper. Our waiters were attentive, the food was good, and the atmosphere easy-going. One didn't feel rushed. Plus points, too, go to the Santa Fe track in New Mexico and Arizona--improved since we'd been here last, mainly due to large sections of welded rail.

Later, we walked thru "Pacific Falls" (shabby interior--one of the earlier refurbishing jobs) and looked out the back into the night. After a while, we retired into "Palm Loch," Roomette 3. This car was refurbished slightly differently, but retained the original Santa Fe pastel--"gas chamber"--green walls. The bed came equipped with two blue Amtrak blankets, one of which had been thru the mill--frayed and faded. Incidentally, no blankets were available for coach passengers. This seems to be the case throughout the West at this time, even tho Amtrak headquarters assured RTN back in November, 1974 that blankets would be on trains all over the system within a couple of months. Sleep came easily this second night out. We opened our eyes momentarily at Flagstaff, observing a huge number of college kids boarding the train. Again, a double stop.

Wednesday, the 18th: We awoke sliding down Cajon Pass to the accompaniment of the snow-covered San Gabriel Mountains. A few minutes late in San Bernardino, but much padding made it easy to make up time for an early (by 7 minutes) arrival in LAX. We sat at breakfast heading towards Pomona, ordering ala carte in order to secure fried potatoes.

Food and service were above average. Voila! Shades of the old SUPER CHIEF: at an adjacent table were two movie stars--John Astin and his wife Patty Duke, who had ridden all the way from Chicago. Yes, they would be more than happy to pose for movies. As we whirred away, Mr. Astin whipped out his Olympus and snapped a couple of pictures of us. We left them to the privacy of their breakfast after a brief interval, but not without noticing that they had selected the French Toast also.

We pulled into the station at Pasadena to the sound of whistles and bells. A hobby shop next to the station is equipped with steam loco whistles and the proprietor sounds off each morning for No. 3. A hop, skip and a jump over the Pasadena and Golden State Freeways brings us to LAX.

What kind of trip was it? Adventurous, to be sure. Is it fair to compare the SOUTHWEST LIMITED to the SUPER CHIEF? 'Course not, but so long as the Pleasure Dome car with its Turquoise Room remains in the consist, the parallel is unavoidable. Result? The SOUTHWEST is not SUPER. It's just like any other long distance Amtrak train. Still, the service, the food and equipment are above par. Amtrak's "premier" train? Maybe three years ago, but not now. Yet it still has <u>class</u>. Amtrak says they are going to improve the service again soon. What should they do? Our suggestion would be, if at all possible, to reinstate the full-length hi-level "Top of the Cap"...uhh, "Rim of the Southwest?" lounge car. And the little things, the little <u>important</u> things, such as: a workable music system; the chimes for dinner, now discontinued; obviously, magazines and writing paper in both lounge cars; local newspapers put aboard at L.A., Albuquerque, and Kansas City eastbound, Chicago, Albuquerque and San Bernardino westbound; an extra crew member in the dining car; and of course, those coach blankets, Mr. Reistrup, those coach blankets.

All in all, there <u>can</u> be another SUPER CHIEF if Amtrak decides not to economize in the wrong places. And a "super" train wouldn't be too hard either. Most everything is there--the Santa Fe, the equipment, the personnel--let's break out those finger bowls and get going.

CARS & CONSISTS

*G. GERRISH WILLIAMS disputes the note here last issue which called diner 8029 the only ex-PC single-unit diner owned by Amtrak. He says 8330-8339, even tho they have a tavern-lounge section, qualify as single-unit diners, and likewise 8349, which is an ex-PRR car.

*SUNSET LIMITED, train 1 at New Orleans Mar 12: engines 555, 551, 542; cars 1089, 9948, 9958, 9913, 3395, 8500, 2724 "Pine Leaf", 2350 "Regal Dome", 2603 "Pacific Bend", and SP office car 99 (engine 542 reportedly being reassigned to SP's Taylor yard to relieve failing F units in West; 2 or 3 others to come).

*FLORIDIAN, train 94-53 (Miami section) Feb 21: engine 582; cars 2233 "Sebring", 8001, 9477, 1426.

*SILVER METEOR, train 84 at Hollywood, FL Feb 28: engines 642, 544, 953 (E-60); cars 1412, 4582, 4446, 4418, 5253, 5668, 4408 "Prairie Sunset", 4416, 4447, 4446, 3371, 8013, 8089, 3205 "Gulf Stream", 2767 "Jacksonville", 2303 (7dbr, 2dr) "Jay Bird", 2231 "Hialeah", 2240 "Monticello."

*RENO FUN TRAIN northbd at Oakland, CA Mar 12: engines 111, 123, 121, 110, 122, 119 (F units); articulated coaches 7533, 7532; diner-lounge 8502; artic coaches 7531, 7530; coach 7500; lounge 3500; artic coaches 7527, 7526; diner-lounge 8503; artic coaches 7528, 7529; lounge 3501; coaches 7502, 7504, 7518, 7517.

*COAST STARLIGHT train 14 at L.A. Mar 14: engines 557, 552; cars 1199, 1501, 4868, 4815, 4869, 4531, 3332, 8033, 2714 "Pine Creek", 2761 "Pine Grove", (following cars owned by Great Western Tours) GRW 204 "Silver Canyon" slpr, GRW 126 "Redwood" slpr-lounge; GRW 112 "Nomad" kitchen-dorm, GRW 111 "Adventurer" diner, GRW 201 "Imperial Sands" slpr, GRW 202 "Golden Gate" slpr, GRW 205 "National Border" slpr; private car SOLX 483 "Minneapolis Club" slpr-lounge-obs (a twin to "Hulham", ex-NCL, owned by an Oroville, CA freight car repair firm. Private cars returning to Oakland from Mex.

*BROADWAY LIMITED, train 41 at NYC Mar 2: engine PC 4936; cars 1160, 2004, 5260, 5256, 3404, 8800, 8801, 3200 "Forest Stream", 2554 "Golden Triangle."

Mixed Train of Thoughts

AMTRAK IS ADVERTISING its USA Rail Pass in local newspapers, and presumably elsewhere with large ads that read "Take this pass and track down America." A sample pass is pictured. We'd judge the ad not too eye-catching, as we went thru our Mar 19 San Francisco Chronicle and failed to notice the 8x14" ad..... TWO AMCLUB CARS are in Chicago as of Mar 18, but not yet in service..... THE LOS ANGELES Herald-Examiner (Mar 14) and other newspapers in the nation carried an editorializing article by Donald I. Rogers, which is extremely negativistic about Amtrak. It's unusual in that it's the only article we've seen which purports to prove with statistics that "passenger rail service is more harmful to the environment and uses up more energy and requires more in subsidies than the other existing forms of transportation", which is, of course, sheer gibberish. The highway-oil lobbies must really be running scared when they sense the popular support for trains and see all the positive arguments on the side of the rail supporters. The result is an attempt such as this article, which concludes with apparent resignation: "Amtrak will remain with us and will no doubt expand by Congressional decree, but since you and I are paying the bill in dollars, in scarce energy and in sullied air, we should know the truth. That is: Amtrak is not the answer to our problems"..... AMTRAK AND THE F.R.A. on Mar 21 were to test the new EMD F40PH locomotive, a 3000hp job with 4 axles, smaller than the SDP40F, with a non-revenue roundtrip between Chicago and Carbondale. A number of these smaller diesels are to be delivered to Amtrak in the next year..... ILLINOIS CENTRAL GULF tracks are the scene of other Amtrak-F.R.A. tests between Mar 15 and Apr 3: tests are being made with Amtrak engines 613 and 618 and E units 436 and 413, along with 3 Amtrak "idler cars" (whatever they are) and EMD test car ET-800. This latter car is the former "American Milemaster", a lightweight Pullman Co. 2 bedrm, 1 cmpt, 1 drawing rm observation lounge (flatend) built for the Chicago-San Francisco TREASURE ISLAND SPECIAL in 1939, and apparently run later on SP's LARK. For the tests, Battele Labs is installing sensors on ICG rails at two sites: one south of Carbondale in a curving area, and one south of Effingham in a 90mph zone. The engines are undergoing track dynamic tests.....

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SANTA FE RAILWAY saw a brief strike of Brotherhood of Railway & Airline Clerks in 11 Western states starting at 4am (PST) on Mar 16, lasting only a few hours, but resulting in cancellation of both SAN JOAQUIN runs that day, and the northbound LONE STAR, but no other effects on Amtrak trains..... AMTRAK IS ELIMINATING the Redcaps (two regular personnel and one relief) at Portland Union Station, and giving their duties to other personnel..... YOSEMITE PARK CONCESSIONAIRES are trying out a free bus to the park from San Francisco. The Greyhound will leave S.F. at 7pm Mar 24 & depart Yosemite on return at 5pm Mar 27. Reservations were needed by noon Mar 22... ROCK ISLAND LINES were granted on Mar 11 a 6-month extension for submitting reorganization plans in their bankruptcy..... CANADA SOUTHERN RAILWAY, a PC Canadian subsidiary, was going to spend a $6 million surplus before ConRail took over, by declaring a $60 per share dividend to stockholders on Mar 30, reported the NY Times in a front page article this month. ConRail complained to a court, and the railroad agreed to hold off on the payment pending a decision..... THE NEW HEAD of California's Dept. of Transportation is a woman--Andriana Gianturco, a Massachusetts Planning Dept. member. Gov. Brown named her to the post this month..... WE'RE GRATEFUL TO readers who have commented about the reduced-size type we've tried in recent issues. Evidently we passed the point of legibility for many people, and so it's back to the regular size with this issue..... CHAIRMAN ARTHUR LEWIS of the USRA said this month that the federal government could in the future offer stock and bonds of ConRail to the general public if the railroad should prove profitable..

PRESIDENT PAUL REISTRUP of Amtrak in a talk last month to the Chicago Union League Club discussed what he called two "really substantial gains" Amtrak made in 1975 in developing the system. One was the signing of the Pullman Standard bi-level car contract a year ago this month. He called authorization of this from the DOT "evidence of approval for Amtrak's continuation in the long-distance service." The second big gain was a little-noted National Arbitration Panel decision made this Feb 3: it favored Amtrak, and decided, in a case involving PC in Indiana, that railroads are bound to maintain their track used for Amtrak trains at not less than the "level of utility" which existed when Amtrak service began. Reistrup said such "level of utility" is "a tangible and measurable standard" which gives Amtrak a foundation on which to build. The system's average speed has been slowing each year, and he aims to speed it up in order to compete successfully with the automobile (he's set his goal as 85mph for long distance and 125 for corridor trains)..... THE SCAREY SIDE: many sources agree that the current period of congressional negotiations over Amtrak funding is one of the most critical times in the rail corporation's history. Paul Reistrup was quoted somewhere the other day as remarking that cutting Amtrak's budget now would be like "inducing an abortion in the seventh month of pregnancy and then trying to save the fetus"..... EVEN BIGGER ISSUES: How come the U.S. is so far behind in railroad electrification--a step that must be taken before petroleum supplies run out? A major article in Railway Age (Feb 23) by Willard D. Weiss discusses this important topic ("U.S. dawdles while the rest of the world turns on"). The statistics presented show that the U.S. has only 1% of its route miles electrified (second worst to Canada, which has essentially none), while European nations run from 99% (Switzerland) to 17% (Britain). Japan has 46%, and India 6%. The electrification of Amtrak's New Haven to Boston line will help, of course. The author notes that by our country's late start, it can profit from the experience of other nations, and starting from scratch, design a well-integrated modern system. This article is highly recommended reading.....

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JANUARY RIDERSHIP FIGURES for long distance trains, with % changes from Jan 1975, are: COAST STARLIGHT 26,851 (up 9%), EMPIRE BUILDER 24,657 (down 2%), SOUTHWEST LTD 21,432 (up 4%), BROADWAY LTD 21,049 (down 10%), NY-Florida trains 20,158 (average ridership of 3 trains, up 16%!), LAKE SHORE LTD 20,146 (not running last year), SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR 20,056 (down 9%), LONE STAR 17,869 (up 9%), NORTH COAST HIAWATHA 17,331 (tri-wkly half of Jan, up 6%), NATIONAL LTD 13,237 (up 16%!), PANAMA LTD 12,981 (up 5%), FLORIDIAN 11,243 (up 8%), J. W. RILEY 8,973 (up 7%), MONTREALER 8,666 (down 37%!), ADIRONDACK 7,345 (n.a.), SUNSET LTD 6,404 (tri-wkly, down 14%!), MOUNTAINEER 4,475 (not running last yr), INTER-AMERICAN 2,456 (tri-wkly, down 18%!). Overall long distance ridership in Jan was up 13% (2% first class, 14% coach) from Jan 1975. Short distance ridership increased 1%; systemwide the rise was 4%.....

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TESTIFYING BEFORE CONGRESS on Amtrak's upcoming funding bill, Orren Beaty of NARP on Mar 10 criticized a document, "Amtrak Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," prepared by Continental Trailways and Eastern Airlines and presented earlier to the Congressional subcommittee. The bus-air paper claimed that service improvements would not help Amtrak ridership, and evidently quoted some suspect figures. But NARP set them straight, pointing to a 30% rise in revenue passenger miles from 1972 to 1975. The alternate-mode boys tried to claim that ridership in 1975 was "substantially below 1972". The report also claimed that quality of train service had nothing to do with reduced pre-Amtrak ridership! Finally, it chose the following routes (those with poor monetary performance) as "principal" routes representative of Amtrak system performance: New Haven-Hartford-Springfield; Oakland-Bakersfield; Seattle-Vancouver; Cumberland-Washington; Seattle-Portland; L.A.-San Diego; and Chicago-Florida. NARP pointed out the problems on most of these routes, including unprotected grade crossings (97 between Seattle & Portland!) which slow speeds.....

NEW AMFLEET CARS are being run on the BANKERS as of Mar 15, Amtrak announced this month. The new equipment will run on alternate days on the Springfield-DC train, and Pres. Reistrup said that in the near future he hopes to have both it and the CONNECTICUT YANKEE running with the new cars each trip. The Feb 23 issue of Railway Age carries an attractive 2-page color ad by the Budd Co. showing Amfleet cars on the assembly line ("The Budd Co. has delivered more passenger cars in the U.S. & has kept more on-time-delivery promises in the past 10 years than any other manufacturer")..... GREYHOUND BUS LINES have been running full-page ads in Chicago papers listing fares to a dozen destinations that undercut Amtrak fares by 5¢ (to Miami, Milwaukee, or Detroit) to $9.60 (to L.A.). ("We leave more often, from more places, to more places in America every day. And cost less than Amtrak.") It's doubtful that many people will switch to the bus to Florida to save a nickel..... VERMONT BICENTENNIAL STEAM Expedition (see RTN 2nd Sept 1975) plans are moving ahead. A preliminary schedule (more on this later) calls for a July 1-Sept 6 operation of a 245-mile roundtrip of the SPIRIT OF ETHAN ALLEN, with a steam engine painted dark green with silver-rimmed, red wheels, and cars in deep Tuscany red with names in gold and green..... AMTRAK CANCELLED ITS Week-of-Wheels program for most of April, reports the NY Times (Mar 21) because it ran out of cars during the upsurge in Florida train traffic. Florida papers reported on the Washington's Birthday weekend last month that numerous Amtrak passengers arrived in Orlando and found that their reserved car was unavailable. In fact six Orlando policemen reportedly were called to maintain order at the Amtrak station on Feb 12..... AMTRAK MAY OFFER its USA Rail Pass again after Labor Day, and at higher rates during the summer, according to the NY Times (Mar 21). Amtrak is said to be now evaluating whether they should be sold beyond the present May 15 cutoff date for sales..... A COMMUTER TRAIN in London was bombed by terrorists on Mar 4, with the explosion occurring after 700 passengers had detrained, altho 8 persons were injured in an adjoining train. On Mar 15 another terrorist bomb exploded on a subway train in east London, killing the engineer and injuring several persons. The following night another blast came in a north London subway station, injuring one person on a platform and derailing a train. On the 18th a massive police operation began, with plain clothesmen riding trains and making selective passenger searches. The bombings were attributed to the Irish Republican Army..... THE ORIENT EXPRESS on Mar 1 struck a bus 85 miles west of Istanbul, with 9 fatalities and 29 injuries on the bus. The eastbound train was at a highway crossing..... JOHNNY CASH SPECIAL train mentioned last issue was to run Mar 20 from Rison to Kingsland, Arkansas. Kingsland is singer Cash's birthplace. Motive power was said to be Bicentennial engine 9389..... AMTRAK'S BALTIMORE STATION will get a passenger lounge and a rebuilt ticket and office area, with the approval in late Feb by Amtrak's Board of $369,440 in improvements..... THE GALESBURG, ILLINOIS BN depot will get a $70,700 facelift with Illinois DOT money this spring, with Sept completion scheduled..... DEMANDS FOR OIL products are climbing with spring arriving, and oil imports are at record levels, while U.S. production is declining, says the Wall Street Journal, leaving the U.S. vulnerable to another Arab oil embargo. The administration is said to be "sharply divided" on how to ward off the effects of such an event. And all the while hardly anything is being done to develop solar energy..... COLUMNIST HERB CAEN in the S.F. Chronicle reports (Mar 19) that our local Amtrak reservations number (800-252-0001) listed in the directory is not in service, and a recording tells you "there is no new number." Quips Caen, "Kafka Lives!"..... AND AUTO-TRAIN elicits a complaint from John F. Humphrey Jr. of Knoxville: "Even with the toll-free number, it takes hours to try to make sense out of their reservation system and then you are still not sure of what you have gotten on record." But the corporation's business purrs along, and a stock dividend of 7% was declared on Mar 10, subject to ICC approval..... A FREIGHT DERAILMENT near Elmhurst on ICG on Mar 7 forced Amtrak to terminate the BLACK HAWK, #372, at Elmhurst and bus passengers to Chicago Union Station.....

MORE THAN EVER, NARP NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!

The National Association of Railroad Passengers is the consumer's lobbyist in Washington for better rail passenger service.
Send your membership remittance ($10 or more) to:

NARP, 417 New Jersey Ave. S.E., Washington DC 20003
(This ad donated by Rail Travel News)

SUPPORT NARP — Bring In A New Member

Yes, I want to aid the cause of better rail passenger service, and receive a membership card and monthly newsletter.

Enclosed is..... ($10 minimum)

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Name .....

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(Please do not use this form to renew. Members should wait for the coded renewal envelope.)

RTN'S

RAIL TRAVEL YEARBOOK

1975

WHERE IS RTN'S RAIL TRAVEL YEARBOOK 1975?

A report to the reader:

Our first yearbook has obviously been delayed beyond its originally announced publication date. It will be out very soon. In the meantime, it has been growing in size and features, so you'll be getting more than you thought you would!

Thank you for your advance order! If you haven't ordered yet, and want to be assured of a copy of this very limited edition, send the coupon or a note to us, with remittance of $3.50 per copy (Calif. add tax of 21¢--or 23¢ in BART counties). Thank you!

MESSAGE MEDIA
Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Send me ____ copy(ies) of RTN's Rail Travel Yearbook 1975 as soon as it's ready.
Amount enclosed: $ _____.

NAME .....

ADDRESS.....

.....

Express Ads

USA RAILPASS - A TRAVEL BARGAIN. Unlimited AMTRAK and SR coach travel - no mileage limit - which can be upgraded to sleeper/parlor as you desire. Reservations made as usual after purchase. Conditions: Available for purchase now thru May 15 only. Travel must begin within 15 days of purchase. Cost: 14 days - $150; 21 days - $200; 30 days - $250. Child 2-11 half fare. Most major credit cards accepted. Call us immediately to order and make reservations. Your USA RAILPASS will be sent to your (or ready for pickup) on the date you desire. GREAT WESTERN TOURS, 639 Market St. #900, San Francisco 94105. (415) 398-2994.

Dining car china dishes and glasses, 10 railroads. Stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kansas 67213.

WANTED TO BUY: Pullman uniforms and PRR waiter's uniforms, china, silverware and menus. Kenneth G. Murry, 209 E. New St., Mountville, PA 17554.

Pullman, Bessemer, Burlington, Cincinnati Hamilton & Dayton & Long Island (On Keystone) uniform buttons, 75¢ each. J. Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

Support effort to establish metropolitan and intercity railway passenger service in and thru Oregon, and to improve Amtrak Starlight route.
Become charter member of OREGON ASSOCIATION OF RAILWAY PASSENGERS.
For further information send self-addressed stamped envelope to John Perrin, 1145 SE Spokane St, Portland, Oregon 97202

RAIL SPEED-O-GRAPH---Instant speed computation chart for railroad passengers. 25 cents or 5 for $1, plus stamp. Ideal for resale by associations, clubs, groups. $12 per 100. Dan Yaeger, 1312 Beverly, St. Louis, MO 63122.

TWO UNUSUAL US FUN-TRAINS--GLAMOROUS WEST Sept 16-Oct 3 and HISTORIC EAST--Oct 19-30--Yellowstone Park, Mount Rainier, Timberline Lodge, San Francisco, Hearst Castle and Los Angeles--Philadelphia, Washington, Richmond, Williamsburg, Atlanta and New Orleans. Very best AMTRAK and Southern trains. Write for complete details. Midwest Travel Service, 2936R Bella Vista, Midwest City OK 73110; 732-0566.

Wanted: Slides of any Amtrak or S.F. Passenger Trains. Trade or buy. Mark Johnston, 2700 Mataro St., Pasadena, CA 91107.

Want to know more about PC, LV, E-L, CNJ, RDG, Chessie, ConRail, pre-merger roads and all others in the Northeast? Then NORTHEAST RAILROADER (Formerly PC RAILFAN) is just what you want. Every issue of NORTHEAST RAILROADER gives you "up to date" News on all railroads in the Northeast, plus a lot of pictures, maps, rosters, locomotive diagrams and more. Subscription rate is $13.50 for six issues. NORTHEAST RAILROADER, 133 Dulles Drive, Dumont, N.J. 07628.

INFLATION GOT YOU DOWN? Sell your timetables to Antique Timecard Acquisitors. We are the logical buyers of all you have. We pay good and we are nice people!! What more could you ask for, except to deal with Raquel Welch, but she's not a collector of rail memoribilia and we are. Anyway, give us a break and dig out that box of timetables from Aunt Prunelda's attic & send it down. Tell Auntie that it's going to a good cause--your wallet. Our money talks better than this ad--eat your heart out Larry Eastwood!! Write us as 126 Coconut Dr, Ft. Myers Beach, FL 33931.

AMTRAK ROUTE DISCONTINUANCES are a real threat due to White House budget for '77. Fight this outrageous cutback with a telegram, registered letter or postcard TODAY! Send your views to President Ford (The White House, Washington DC 20500) plus Senator Eagleton & your own Senators (Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510). Also contact William Coleman, Secretary of Transportation. Also write to your local newspaper. Get your friends to write, too.

ADVERTISING RATES FOR RAIL TRAVEL NEWS: Express Ads 50¢ per line of 80 spaces. Display ads (camera-ready copy) $25/page (5x8), smaller sizes priced in proportion. Write: MESSAGE MEDIA - RTN, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Thank you!

LETTERS (continued from page 2)

In the Second Feb issue you correctly state that the ex-B&O "Bird" series 16-4's are not slumbercoaches. Bravo! Then three pages later in "Cars & Consists" you list the consist of the LAKE SHORE LIMITED with #2017 "Wren", stating "Boston 'sleeper' actually a slumbercoach." Oh, well, nobody's perfect!

H. Hanrahan
Kansas City, Missouri

(Ed. note: Yes, we're still perfect. The Cars & Consists page may appear later in pagination, but it was written earlier in time and was coming off the press while the correct statement in the Mixed Train section was being written. Mixed Train is almost always written last, held out to the last minute for the latest news and tidbits and corrections. Some day soon we will print a typical production timetable of RTN to illustrate the pains we take to get you the latest news as fast as possible.)

In your last issue, a reader indicated preference for descriptions of train rides rather than editorials and "theoretical" articles. I can empathize with persons who derive enjoyment from narratives which arouse images of appealing sights, sounds, and other sensations which revive memories of pleasant experiences in earlier years. But descriptions of actual train riding in our time can continue possible only if a political environment prevails which encourages, rather than stifles, organizations disposed to construct, maintain, and utilize railway infrastructure. It can be possible only if pride of accomplishment characterizes personnel (including operating officers and directors) engaged to perform whatever duty is necessary to make a railway function; only if by their combined efforts, those individuals undertake to demonstrate the wide range of potentialities for serving public needs of which railway technology is capable.

I very much admired your First Feb editorial: "Bicentennial: Freedom of Mobility." If the attitudes you sought to evoke on that page are cultivated, a traveler between Paoli and Dubuque/Ottumwa will experience much faster and smoother riding trains, more frequently scheduled and better staffed. Passenger stations will be more attractive than the building in Paoli has become. "Mixed Train of Thoughts" will have more substantial improvements in service to report in each issue.

Mental attitudes must provide the impetus for decent political environment, for conduct deserving of respect, and for high morale. Such mental attitudes derive from ideas expressed by well written editorials and articles dealing with principles. Pictures and trip narratives may entertain us and induce comforting euphoria. Editorials should stimulate us to much-needed action.

Ken McFarling
Portland, Oregon

I like the "Cars & Consists" section of your publication very much. It is very interesting to find which cars are on the various routes. Thank you for your excellent publication.

Phil Gosney
Oakland, California

I am not a "rail buff" but am a chemist and aware of limitations of our energy, resources and environment. My interest (since the 1930's) has been in railroads as practical, efficient, economic, safe, comfortable, all-weather transportation with least demand on the above limited factors. Hence I am little interested in consists but much in policies, design, scheduling, political influences, as they affect transportation and energy use in general and railroads as an important element (one which helped us win World War II).

John M. Sayward
Randolph, Vermont

What is the most misspelled word among rail writers? The most misspelled word, according to our experience, is "Santa Fe," frequently misspelled "Sante Fe."